CLAIMS:

1. A method of determining proximity of a target node to a source node, comprising:

communicating a query from the source node to the target node,

communicating a response from the target node to the source node,

receiving the response at the source node,

determining a measure of query-response time between communicating the query and receiving the response, and

determining the proximity of the target node based on the measure of query-response time.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein

determining the proximity includes comparing the query-response time to a threshold value that distinguishes between local and remote nodes.

3. The method of claim 2, further including

restricting communications with the target node based on the proximity.

4. The method of claim 1, further including

restricting communications with the target node based on the proximity.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein

communicating the query and response is effected via a TCP/IP ping network command.

6. A node on a network including:

a communication device that is configured to transmit a query to a target node and to receive a corresponding response from the target node,

the response from the target node including a measure of processing time required to generate the response at the target node, and

a processor that is configured to:

generate the query,

receive the response,

measure a query-response time between generating the query and receiving the response, and

determine a proximity of the target node relative to the node based on the query-response time.

7. The node of claim 6, wherein

the processor is configured to determine the proximity based on a comparison of the query-response time to a threshold value that distinguishes between local and remote nodes.

8. The node of claim 7, wherein

the processor is further configured to control subsequent communications with the target node based on the proximity.

9. The node of claim 6, wherein

the processor is further configured to control subsequent communications with the target node based on the proximity.

10. The node of claim 6, wherein

the processor generates the query using a TCP/IP ping network command.